

The Wildlife Society

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION

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KATHERINE EDWARDS, EDITOR



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Greetings from West Tennessee! As we move toward summer, I would like to share some information and reflections on the past few months in the Southeastern Section.

A few weeks ago, Clemson University hosted the 40th annual Southeastern Wildlife Student Conclave. Over 400 students attended from 22 schools; thanks to Clemson and all who helped put on a fantastic event, and congratulations to the attendees for your impressive efforts in the competitions – great job, all!

I mentioned in the January newsletter the momentum to create a Society-wide Conservation Affairs Network (CAN) made up of Section- and Chapter-level Conservation Affairs Committees (CACs). This effort was initiated by TWS Government Affairs Deputy Director **Terra Rentz**. Terra has moved on from this position to pursue other opportunities; **Keith Norris** is our new Assistant Director of Government Affairs and Partnerships. Keith is excited about continuing to facilitate this Society-wide initiative; he can be reached at Keith.Norris@wildlife.org, 301-897-9770 x 309. Meanwhile, **Dr. William Moore** from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College has graciously accepted the chair of a new Ad Hoc Conservation Affairs Planning Committee, to oversee the formation of this network in the Southeastern Section. I look forward to working with William to facilitate communication among the state chapter CACs throughout the Southeastern Section, as well as with other sections and the parent society.

Recently, each TWS Section was invited to nominate a representative to serve on the Editorial Advisory Board (EAB) for *The Wildlife Professional* (TWP) magazine. This representation will help insure that the content and focus of this excellent publication accurately represent the membership of The Wildlife Society. I'm proud to report that **Joe McGlincy** with The Wildlife Company, from Bainbridge, GA, has

agreed to represent the Southeastern Section. Joe will bring his wealth of experiences from across the Southeast and a unique and valuable private-sector perspective to the board.

The Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 68th Annual Conference (and the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society's associated Annual Meeting) will be in Destin, FL on October 19-22. As you make plans to attend, please consider nominating those you know who may be deserving of the Wildlife Management Excellence Award, or the C. W. Watson Award. Nomination instructions are provided in this newsletter. Also, student chapters, it isn't too late to apply for the Southeastern Student Chapter of the Year Award! Nomination instructions are also provided herein for this award.

Finally, I would like to thank our committee chairs, old and new, for your service; it's your "boots in the mud" that represent the real work of our Section. I'd also like to thank all those who have recently submitted state news for this newsletter, and to our newsletter editor and webmaster, **Katie Edwards**, for the great job that she does compiling your accomplishments. I'm always inspired to read about the vast array of wildlife management efforts by our members. Keep up the great work!

Eric Pelren, Southeastern Section President

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SOUTHEASTERN SECTION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Greetings wildlifers! I hope you all had opportunities to get out and enjoy the spring. It seemed that winter never wanted to let go this year but I for one won't complain about extended chilly temperatures and about a month-long delay in mowing my yard for the first time.

In late March, I attended the Spring TWS Council meeting, held in Denver, CO, the weekend before the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. As always, the agenda was full and I just wanted to highlight a few items. As you are likely aware, TWS has been engaged into returning to stable financial footing and a sustainable fiscal future. To that end, we had a robust budget discussion at the spring meeting, which included approval of a budget for the next fiscal year (2014-15; the fiscal year now runs from July 1 – June 30). In 2013, the TWS budget was in the black with TWS equity increasing by \$100,000 between 2012 and 2013. The goal for 2014-15 is to begin rebuilding our financial foundation by planning to under spend projected revenues by approximately \$122,000. This "surplus" will be invested into TWS's asset base.

In the last newsletter, I mentioned that TWS saw the departure of **Terra Rentz** and **Darryl Walter**; Terra left TWS to enter graduate school and Darryl left for another job opportunity. In addition, **Yanin Walker's** position at TWS was eliminated as part of TWS's fiscal re-alignment efforts. Yanin served the Society admirably for decades; please join me in wishing her the best of luck in the future. The good news is that TWS has brought on board replacements for both Terra and Darryl. Mr. **Ed Thompson** joined TWS as Chief of Operations on Feb. 14, 2014. Ed has a long history of involvement in association management and leadership at the directorate and vice-presidential level, with a strong background and experience in membership development, marketing strategy, and conferencing. Additionally, Mr. **Keith Norris** joined TWS on Feb. 18, 2014 as the Assistant Director, Government

Affairs and Partnerships. Finally, TWS has hired a Development Manager to provide a much-needed focus on grants, donations, membership expansion, and outreach to potential TWS partners. Ms. **Hedy Ross** was selected for this position and also started with TWS in mid-February. I had an opportunity to visit with both Ed and Keith at the spring meeting and I am very excited about what these individuals bring to TWS. Please join me in congratulating these new staff members!

At the spring Council meeting, progress was also made on laying the groundwork for creation of a new 5-year strategic plan for TWS; the current plan was developed in 2008. The next strategic plan will be organized around four key ideas: (1) It needs to be shorter, more focused, more strategic and less operational in these uncertain and fast-changing times as compared to the 2008 plan; (2) It needed to include a limited number of clear strategic goals, which would resonate against a vision for TWS over the next 5 years and provide a roadmap for achieving that vision; (3) It should include a limited set of objectives that would essentially articulate and help focus the goals; and (4) There should be accompanying annual operational plans and metrics that would tie back to the plan vision, strategic goals, and objectives in driving implementation and measuring progress. There is currently a draft, strategic plan that was revised by Staff, submitted to the Executive Committee of Council, then to Council, and finally published in the May *Wildlifer* for membership review with an opportunity to comment on the plan at the October TWS Conference in Pittsburgh. So, if you are interested in the strategic plan, keep your eyes on *The Wildlifer*.

As always, I need to hear from you, the membership of the SE Section TWS to serve your needs. I hope to hear from you!

Darren Miller, Southeastern Section
Representative to TWS Council

COMMITTEE REPORTS

DEER COMMITTEE

Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting Successful in Georgia

The 2014 Southeast Deer Study Group was hosted by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and University of Georgia in Athens. Special thanks go to **Charlie Killmaster** for his leadership. The meeting was attended by 301 biologists and interested persons. **Mark Bara**, former biologist with South Carolina DNR received the Career Achievement Award. **Bradley Cohen** from the University of Georgia won the outstanding student oral presentation award. **Blaise Korzekwa**, Texas A&M University at Kingsville, won the outstanding student poster presentation award. The 2015 conference will be held February 23-25 and hosted by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Steve Demarais, sdemarais@cfr.msstate.edu



Mark Bara, 2014 recipient of the Southeast Deer Study Career Achievement Award, stands with seven past recipients at the 2014 Southeast Deer Study in Athens, Georgia. From left to right, Harry Jacobson, Dave Guynn, Bob Zaiglin, Larry Marchinton, Mark Bara, Joe Hamilton, Charlie DeYoung, and Dave Samuel.

STUDENT AWARDS COMMITTEE

TWS Student awards will be presented at the upcoming 68th Annual SEAFWA Conference, to be held in Destin, FL. Eligibility for poster and presentation awards includes students who have graduated within one year prior to the meeting and are presenting on their research conducted as a student. If you have or know of student presenters in the wildlife sessions please encourage them to participate. In addition to being recognized for their presentation at SEAFWA, the winning student will also be presented an award (a plaque and \$100 for best poster and \$200 for best presentation). The Southeastern Section of TWS also provides a plaque and a \$1,000.00 cash award to the student chapter of the year based on the chapter's involvement in activities that advance their members professional development and the goals of TWS. Guidelines for the chapter award can be obtained from the S.E. Section President and must be turned in by June 30, 2014. Again it is an excellent accolade and provides some funding to further the activities of the winning chapter.

Kelly Douglass, Chair, SETWS Student Awards Committee, kelly.douglass@ncwildlife.org

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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C.W. WATSON AWARD COMMITTEE

Nominations are being sought for the 2014 Clarence W. Watson Award. This annual award will be presented at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference in Destin, Florida, October 19-22, 2014. The Clarence W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given in the Southeast and is presented to the career individual who, in the opinion of the Award Committee, has made the greatest contribution to wildlife or fish conservation during the previous year or years. Consideration includes research, administration, law enforcement, I&E, wildlife management, fish management, teachers, and students.

Preference is given to nominees in the Southeast. The award is a mounted bronze plaque presented jointly by the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, the Southeastern Section of the Wildlife Society, and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. All Southeastern fish and wildlife conservationists and other interested persons are encouraged to nominate worthy candidates. Nominations should be submitted in the format shown on page 22 of this newsletter and should include complete information on the candidate's background; i.e., education, training, noteworthy accomplishments, and particularly, the achievement(s)

for which the nomination is being made. The nomination should include, but not be limited to, a description of the accomplishment(s), application in the state and region concerned, time involved, and the amount of aid received from associates. Furnish as much information as possible to aid the committee in making the selection. A previously unselected nominee may be resubmitted each year.

*The C.W. Watson Award may be given for accomplishing a single item or a series of different non-related items. But the award is given to a nominee who has contributed the most to any of the appropriate areas of fish and wildlife conservation. Emphasis is on contribution, not tenure. Those making nominations are requested to insure that they explain clearly what was accomplished and how it contributed.

Selection will be based on specific accomplishment(s) and other information included in the letter of nomination. Nominations should be sent to: **J. Wesley Neal**, Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Aquaculture, Box 9690, Mississippi State, MS 39762-9690; jneal@cfr.msstate.edu; 662-325-8363 as soon as possible but no later than August 15, 2014.



Photo: Bill Starling

STATE REPORTS

ALABAMA



Alabama Chapter

2014 Meeting held April 3 – 4 in Spanish Fort, AL at the 5 Rivers - Alabama's Delta Resource Center. On the 3rd we had presentations on trapping techniques for wildlife damage management and recreation for our Professional Development Program. On the 4th we had numerous presentations from Auburn University faculty and graduate students and from Alabama A&M University graduate students.

Student Poster Winner: Breeding Bird Community Response and Post-breeding Dispersal of the Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) to a Gradient of Forest Canopy Reduction in an Upland Hardwood Forest. * **Eric Margenau**, Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, Alabama A&M University, P.O. Box 1927, Normal, AL 35762, emargena@bulldogs.aamu.edu

Student Presentation Winner: Deerfinder: Image processing program for identification of deer in game camera photos.* **Jennifer Price**¹, **Brian S. West**², **Conor P. McGowan**³, **Stephen S. Ditchkoff**¹, **Stanley J. Reeves**², **James B. Grand**³, and **Allison C. Keever**¹. ¹School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences and ²Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, Auburn University and ³USGS Alabama Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit.

Elizabeth Johnson instated as Chapter President. Newly elected officers are: President Elect – **Wes Stone** with Alabama A&M University, Past President – **Mark Smith**, Alabama Extension, SE Representative – **Shannon Allen**, Ecologist with US Army on Redstone Arsenal, and Executive Board Member - **Allison Cochrane**, Biologist with USFS on Bankhead NF.

Shannon Allen, shannon.l.allen.civ@mail.mil.
Mark Smith, mds0007@auburn.edu

Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division (WFF)

The Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division (WFF) announces the revision process of the 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). By Congressional State Wildlife Grant (SWG) requirements, this comprehensive document must be revised every 10 years. The SWG program assists state fish and wildlife agencies in the conservation of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). To remain eligible for SWG funds, each state must revise its SWAP every 10 years. Over the next two years, WFF and its partners will work with wildlife experts and other key stakeholders throughout the state to develop a comprehensive plan to conserve wildlife and native habitats. During that time, distinct habitats in the greatest need of conservation will be reviewed by experts across the state. WFF will also prioritize Alabama's SGCN and their habitats, and build upon the updated information rankings from Alabama's Nongame Symposium of 2012. For more information, contact **Traci Wood**.

The Alabama Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation recently presented a check for \$25,627 to the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division for the purchase of 14.6 acres of wildlife habitat at Barbour Wildlife Management Area in Barbour County. The Division will be able to use these dollars as match when purchasing additional lands with state and federal funds at Barbour WMA in the future. The three-to-one match means the Division can utilize approximately \$77,000 additional dollars of federal money on a future land purchase in lieu of state dollars. This generous donation by the Alabama Chapter NWTF demonstrates their ongoing commitment to be a leader in support of the Division's conservation mission. Thanks to NWTF State Chapter President Phil Savage and the Board of Directors for their efforts.

Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division staff recently partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife in their Eastern wild turkey restoration efforts in east Texas. Alabama was one of a few donor states

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that supplied Texas with wild turkeys for this project during the 2014 trapping season. Using cannon nets, staff trapped a total of 25 birds (8 adult gobblers and 17 adult hens) at the Fred T. Stimpson Community Hunting Area in Clarke County. The turkeys were leg banded and blood samples drawn to test for Avian Influenza and Salmonella which all came back negative. Now, these healthy Alabama birds roam the woodlands of East Texas. Alabama WFF will receive a \$500 replacement cost for each turkey (\$12,500) to be earmarked for land acquisition.

Jim Schrenkel, Jim.Schrenkel@al.usda.gov

US Forest Service

National Forests in Alabama hired **Ryan Shurette** as the new Forest Biologist. Ryan previously served as National Forests in Alabama's Forest Botanist and as a Wildlife Biologist on the Talladega National Forest.

The U.S. Forest Service has discovered White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) in two bats collected recently in the Bankhead National Forest. The bats, which tested positive for WNS, were found in Armstrong and Backwards-Confusion Caves on the Bankhead National Forest. The specimens represent the first confirmed cases of WNS for Lawrence County, Alabama. According to **Eric Schmeckpeper**, acting District Ranger of the Bankhead National Forest, the Forest Service issued a closure order for caves in all southern region national forests in May 2009 to proactively slow the spread of the fungus. The closure order remains active and includes caves in the Bankhead National Forest.

Allison Cochrane, jacobran@fs.fed.us

Alabama Bat Working Group: Meeting held 2 April 2014 at Alabama A&M University. Results from winter cave surveys were presented with possible evidence of White-Nose Syndrome effects on populations. Lawrence and Morgan Counties were added to the list of White-Nose positive counties in Alabama. Fall 2014 Bat Blitz location and objectives still undecided. Alabama White-Nose Syndrome Management Plan to be revised in 2014.

Shannon Allen, shannon.l.allen.civ@mail.mil

Big Turnout for the 2014 International Wild Pig Conference

Over 250 wild pig biologists, researchers, and managers attended the 2014 International Wild Pig Conference on April 13-16 at the Embassy Suites and Conference Center in Montgomery, evidence of the growing interest in managing this non-native species. Hosted by **Mark Smith** and **Steve Ditchkoff** at Auburn University and **Jessica Tegt** (Mississippi State University) the conference showcased the latest science-based management of wild pigs. The biennial conference kicked-off with a day-long Technical Training Session that critically examined the issues surrounding wild pigs, defined the scope of the problem, and then identified the best tools, techniques, management strategies, and collaborations to move forward. Led by plenary speaker **Kevin Shea**, Administrator of the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the balance of the conference featured technical sessions covering a wide array of topics including human dimensions, control measures, toxicants and contraceptives, distribution, biology, genetics, and behavior. The next International Wild Pig Conference is tentatively set for April 10-13, 2016 in Louisville, KY. To learn more, please visit <http://www.wildpigconference.com/>.

Mark Smith, mds0007@auburn.edu



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ARKANSAS



NO NEWS REPORTED

FLORIDA



Florida Chapter of TWS 2014 Spring Conference

The Florida Chapter of TWS (FLTWS) in conjunction with the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) held their spring conference April 28 – May 1, 2014 in Safety Harbor, Florida. The Plenary Session theme was "Breaking Bad in Florida: Gaining Ground on Invasive Plants and Wildlife in the 21st Century". Speakers included **Jeff Klinkenberg** (Tampa Bay Times), **Manley Fuller** (FL Wildlife Federation), **David Durando** (Okeechbee Partners Ranch), **Hilary Swain** (Archbold Biological Station) and **Dr. Ken Langeland** (University of Florida). The conference also featured a Symposium (Helping the Public Help Us with Pesky Plants and Wildlife), oral presentations and a poster session.

Student Scholarships

The FLTWS Student Scholarship was established in 1998 to recognize and financially assist undergraduate students pursuing a career in wildlife biology at a 4-year school in Florida, during their Junior or Senior year. In 2008, the scholarship was renamed the Greater Everglades Student Memorial Scholarship in honor of the 3 FAU students so tragically lost during a wading bird survey that March, and increased to \$2,000 annually. Applicants for the scholarship are judged on the basis of their extracurricular activities, demonstrated leadership, professional potential, financial need, and personal goals. The Florida Wildlife Federation co-sponsors the scholarship.

We are pleased to announce that **Samantha Baroian** is the recipient of the 16th annual scholarship for undergraduate studies, administered by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society. As a senior at the University of Florida, Sam is working on a B.S. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation with a focus on Human Dimensions and minors in both Latin American Studies as well as International Development and Humanitarian Assistance. Sam has not only been a part of the UF student chapter of The Wildlife Society since she enrolled there; she was already serving as Vice President during her sophomore year and as President during her junior year. She has earned a multitude of honors during her time at UF, including an award for 'Outstanding Departmental Service' from the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation which was conferred in acknowledgement of her many contributions to the department. Some examples of the leadership Sam has provided include coordination of a campus career showcase for students with an interest in natural resources, coordination of a field trip to Payne's Prairie State Park and a mentoring workshop during the FLTWS fall conference in 2013, and serving on the Board of Directors of the Florida Wildlife Federation as their Youth Conservation Director. She regularly takes advantage of opportunities to enhance her professional development, through such programs as the Honors Professional Development Program at UF, and by serving as Special Events Intern for the UF Honors Program. In the field, Sam has gained valuable experience through two independent studies where she investigated manatees in Crystal River and small mammals in Africa. Following graduation from UF, Sam plans to present results of her independent research at several conferences and will begin a graduate degree in August. Her professional aspirations involve a career in conservation planning. As this year's recipient, Sam received a check for \$2,000 at the FLTWS Spring Conference held in April in Safety Harbor, FL.



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The FLTWS graduate student scholarship was established in 2013 to recognize and financially assist one outstanding graduate student pursuing a career in wildlife biology or management at a university in Florida. The scholarship is named in honor of **Courtney A. Tye**, an outstanding wildlife biologist, graduate student, and cherished friend to many, who tragically passed away in 2014 due to complications during childbirth. Courtney, who was working full time for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission while completing her graduate degree in the department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation at the University of Florida, was an inspiration to all who knew her.

We are pleased to announce that **Daniel Greene** is the recipient of the 1st annual scholarship for graduate studies, administered by the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Dan is a second year Ph.D. student at the University of Florida, studying the ecology of fox squirrels.

He previously earned an MS degree from the University of Georgia where he developed a longterm monitoring strategy for the endangered Key Largo cotton mouse, and also a B.A. in biology from Earlham College in Indiana. Dan's aptitude for

leadership is evidenced by the fact that he has served several times as a field crew leader where he trained and supervised technicians, he has managed entire volunteer programs, and he has already mentored over 50 undergraduate and graduate students. Dan has convincingly demonstrated strong potential to become a productive research biologist: he already has five first-authored papers at this early stage in his career. He has also unequivocally shown his commitment to applied wildlife conservation, as he is currently working with FWC to develop management plans for fox squirrels, beach mice, and chipmunks. Dan has previously held full time positions with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Florida Park Service, where he was responsible for research associated with beach mice and exotic plant eradication. Dan's aspirations after graduation include a post-doc, followed by a career in research on threatened and endangered species, with a special interest in how species respond to changes in habitat conditions and management practices. As this year's recipient, Daniel received a check for \$2,000 at the FLTWS Spring Conference held in April in Safety Harbor, FL.



Fox Squirrel
(*Sciurus niger*)
Photo: Bo Chambers
myfwc.com



Key Largo Cotton Mouse
(*Peromyscus gossypinus allapaticola*)
Photo: Phil Frank

Citizen Conservation Award

The Citizen Conservation Award, sponsored by FLT-WS and the Florida Master Naturalist Program (UF-IFAS), was created in 2010 to recognize individuals and groups who have made significant contributions to conservation of Florida's wildlife resources during the previous calendar year. Achievements can be related to management, restoration, education, or protection. The person or group considered for this award does not have to be a member of the Florida or parent chapter of The Wildlife Society. The 2013 Citizen Conservation Award goes to the Friends of Thornby.

Friends of Thornby nomination statement: This nomination recognizes the successful grassroots efforts of a small, dedicated group of local citizens to conserve an area of environmental and cultural significance. The area, known as "Thornby," is a 40-acre parcel of Old Florida boasting 1,000 feet of shoreline on Lake Monroe in West Volusia County. In addition to the cultural significance associated with remnants of an Indian midden and a possible Seminole Indian Wars fort, the area supported centuries-old live oak and cypress trees, more than seven acres of wetlands that serve as both a discharge and recharge area for the Floridan aquifer, and a host of wildlife and native plant species. When a proposal to change local land-use planning to allow high density development on Thornby was submitted during 2000, an effort to conserve this area as a public park was initiated by a group of individuals that called themselves the Friends of Thornby, which included Florida Master Naturalist **Sandra Walters**. Empowered by the knowledge gained in their FMNP course and technical information gleaned from local experts, including the carrying capacity of Thornby's soils and drainage patterns, the Friends of Thornby were well-equipped to support their position in the effort to conserve the property. The process was long and difficult, and involved 11 public hearings, several development plan changes, and three local elections.

Conservation efforts were finally met with success after nine years when the Thornby property was purchased by Volusia County and the City of Deltona.

Once slated for high-density development, Thornby Park now offers a handicapped-accessible playground, gazebo, and a mulched trail that takes park visitors into the interior of the property. The remaining 38 acres of the Park has been preserved in its natural state to provide ecological services and to benefit wildlife and the native plant communities they depend upon.

You can learn more about the effort to conserve Thornby Park, including valuable insights for "ordinary citizens" working toward a conservation goal opposed by local special interests from the Story of Thornby website (<http://www.thestoryofthornby.com/index.html>) and the book "The Story of Thornby: How Ordinary People Took on Government," published by Blackwyrn Press and available on Amazon.com.

The vision, the considerable effort, and the eventual success of this group is a testimony to what local citizens can accomplish.

Florida Department of Agriculture Rural and Family Lands Protection Program

Commissioner of Agriculture **Adam H. Putnam** and members of the Board of Trustees approved the recommended 2014 Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP) Prioritized Acquisition List. The RFLPP is a program of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Florida Forest Service that partners with private landowners to protect Florida's landscape, wildlife habitat and other natural resources, while maintaining private ownership and continuing agricultural operations.

"This program is unique in that it protects the environmental benefits of the land, while allowing agricultural operations to continue," said Adam Putnam, Commissioner of Agriculture and a member of the Board of Trustees. "These lands will remain in the hands of private owners and will continue to generate revenue, create jobs and support the local economy."

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All four members of the Board of Trustees, including the Governor, voted to approve the recommended 2014 RFLPP Prioritized Acquisition List. With this approval, the RFLPP may begin partnering with these private landowners to create conservation easements to protect working agricultural lands throughout Florida.

The list ranks 50 eligible projects that applied to participate in the RFLPP during the recent application period, July 15 through August 28, 2013. The project applications were reviewed by teams of representatives of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Economic Opportunity, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and applicable water management districts. The teams conducted onsite reviews to assess the projects' merits and contributions to the goals of the program, including:

- Protect valuable agricultural lands;
- Continue agricultural production using sustainable agricultural practices;
- Provide reasonable protection of the environment without interfering with agricultural operations; and
- Protect natural resources.

The list, divided into three tiers, with Tier 1 being the highest priority, was developed by the technical review teams based on the evaluations. It was approved by the Selection Committee on November 15, 2013, and by the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) on December 13, 2013.

The RFLPP was created in 2001 with the goal of acquiring perpetual agricultural conservation easements that ensure lands will be preserved in agricultural use while providing for the protection of natural resources. The initial acquisition list consisted of 35 projects and was approved by the Board of Trustees on April 28, 2009. The most recent acquisition was approved by the Board of Trustees on November 19, 2013. Currently, more than 5,000 acres of land is protected as part of the RFLPP.

During the 2013 session, the Florida Legislature designated an additional \$11.1 million to support the RFLPP. This funding will be used to acquire conservation easements for projects listed in the approved 2014 RFLPP Prioritized Acquisition List.

- FDEP News Release 1/23/2014

University of Florida

The University of Florida Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society has elected new officers for the 2014-2015 school year. Congratulations to the following newly elected officers:

- President: **Erica Christiansen**
- Vice Presidents: **Elizabeth Sanchez, Ty Cramer**
- Secretary: **Jeanelle Brisbane**
- Treasurer: **Jessie Bergau**
- Historian: **Bryan Pepper**
- Environmental Education Coordinators: **Sean McKnight, Jaclyn Selden**
- Conclave Coordinators: **Rachel Sally, Maurice Greenwood**
- Webmaster/Editor: **Jordanne Laurito**
- Sophomore Representative: **Katie Wucker**
- FLTWS Representative: **Lauren Diaz**

Ignition Planning & Prescribed Fire Techniques for Wildlife

FLTWS has partnered with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Florida Forest Service to host the Ignition Planning & Prescribed Fire for Wildlife Workshop. The workshop was held May 5-8, 2014 at the Cecil Commerce Center in Jacksonville, FL. This training was designed to provide foresters, wildlife biologists and land managers with basic information on wildlife habitat management opportunities associated with prescribed fires in Florida. It includes sections addressing how ignition plans can be developed and implemented to meet specific wildlife objectives while minimizing risk.

Patrick Delaney, Patrick.Delaney@fltws.org
Florida TWS Southeastern Representative

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GEORGIA



Georgia DNR, Wildlife Resources Division

Jessica McGuire Recognized With 2014 Conservation Hero Award

Dr. Jessica L. McGuire, wildlife biologist with the Private Lands Program of the GaDNR Wildlife Resources Division, recently was honored with the 2014 Conservation Hero Award by Southeast Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (SEPARC). McGuire's recognition comes thanks to her exemplary commitment to strengthening partnerships that further herpetofaunal conservation.

As a wildlife biologist with the private lands program, McGuire provides technical assistance to landowners. Additionally, she also is active with the Gopher Tortoise Council, and currently serving as co-chair.



(L-R) McGuire, Keri Landry
(SEPARC Steering Committee)

More Information:

- SEPARC: www.facebook.com/pages/Southeast-Partners-in-Amphibian-and-Reptile-Conservation-SEPARC
- Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division: www.georgiawildlife.com
- Gopher Tortoise Council: www.facebook.com/pages/Gopher-Tortoise-Council

Georgia Wildlife Resources Director Named President of North American Association

The director of Georgia's Wildlife Resources Division, **Dan Forster**, is helping lead the organization that represents fish and wildlife agencies across North America, the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). Forster, a Georgia native, has served as Wildlife Resources Division director for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources since 2004 and has been with the agency since 1990.

The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies' governing board is made up of fish and wildlife agency directors from state and provincial governments including all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canada and Mexico. Dating to 1902, the association advances science-based management and conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public's interest. The association's role varies from representing state agencies on Capitol Hill to providing members coordination services on species-based programs, while also working closely with a variety of federal agency and industry partners and national conservation organizations.

More Information:

- Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies: www.fishwildlife.org
- Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division: www.georgiawildlife.com

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Multi-State Conservation Grant Makes Recruitment & Retention Study Possible

The Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division's Hunter Development Program has partnered with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to conduct a study on "Recruiting and Retaining Nontraditional, Young Adult Participants into Hunting and Fishing through Targeted Marketing, Instruction, Mentoring and Social Reinforcement."

What is the goal of this two-year study? To develop the necessary tools to introduce hunting and fishing to young adults in urban/suburban settings who are interested in locally grown or organic foods (locavore movement). To begin, a toolbox and A/V resources for use with instruction and mentoring are scheduled for development. Then, a pilot program will take place in 5-10 states. Finally, a market analysis will be performed for the selected population centers in the pilot states to help agencies determine their potential new license customer base.

Funding for this study came from a multi-state conservation grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

DNR Launches Interactive Map of Recreational Lands: The Georgia Outdoor Map

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has unveiled an interactive map that identifies DNR-managed lands and outdoor recreation

opportunities. The "Georgia Outdoor Map" includes state parks, wildlife management areas, public fishing areas, boat ramps, and historic sites. Users are able to search by category to find locations where they can camp, hunt, hike, fish or explore history.

The "Georgia Outdoor Map" can be visited using any device with a web browser including desktops, phones and tablets. By checking criteria fields, users can find recreational opportunities, directions, handicap accessibility, telephone numbers and website links for more details. The tool also offers a "near me" function to help users determine which recreational opportunities are closest to them.

To view the free, interactive map, visit: www.georgiaoutdoormap.com.

Personnel Updates for Wildlife Resources Division:

Director's Office-770-918-6400

Dan Forster, Director

Mark Whitney, Assistant Director

Jenifer Hancock, Marketing and Communications Manager

Game Management-770-918-6404

John W. Bowers, Chief, Game Management

Ted Will, Assistant Chief, Game Management

Don McGowan-Region Operations Manager

Kristina Brunjes-Program Operations Manager



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Fisheries Management-770-918-6406

John Biagi, Chief, Fisheries Management

Matt Thomas, Assistant Chief, Fisheries Management

Scott Robinson-Operations Manager

Thom Litts-Operations Manager

Nongame Conservation Section-770-761-3035

Mike Harris, Chief

Jon Ambrose, Assistant Chief, Nongame Conservation Section

Conservation Organizations Team Up for Quail

The Georgia Wildlife Resources Division is partnering up with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), Quail Forever and Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy to help the northern bobwhite (quail) and youth shooting programs in Florida and Georgia.

All four organizations have signed a memorandum of agreement pledging that they will each provide mutually beneficial support to a project called the Florida/Georgia Quail Coalition, whose goal is to enhance, promote and conserve quality habitat for

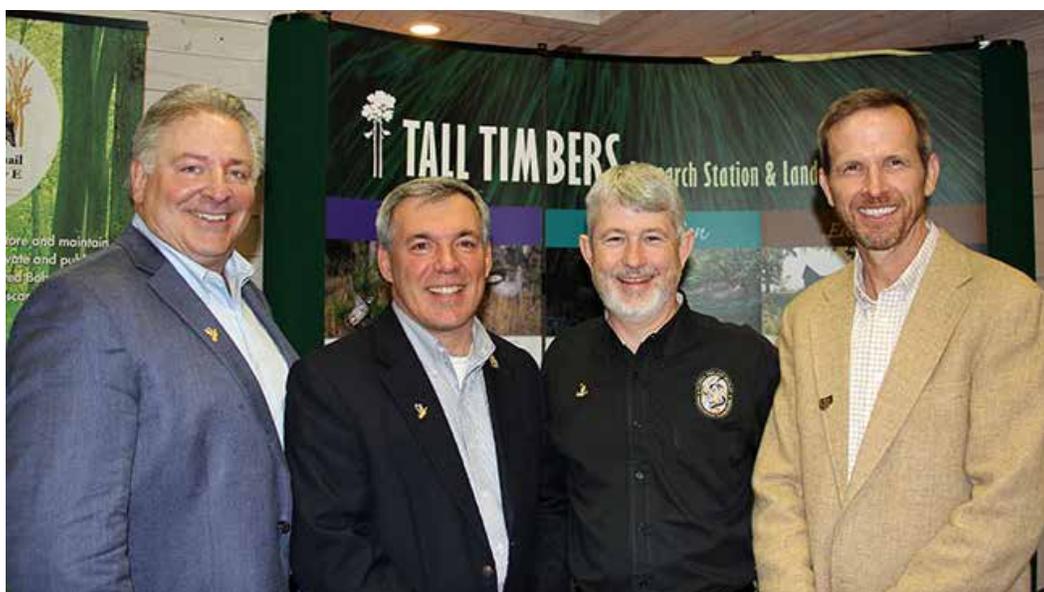
northern bobwhite and to promote and support youth shooting sports programs and education.

The organization also is charged with providing funding to establish, manage and monitor quail populations and habitat on public and private lands in Florida and Georgia, and to work with the Coalition to increase youth hunting opportunities on some of these lands once adequate bird populations and habitat have been restored. Also, Quail Forever is to provide funding from its local chapters to help pay the cost of youth shooting sports programs and scholastic shooting teams.

To increase and enhance quality quail habitat, money for projects will be spent on frequent small-scale prescribed burning, removing oak trees, roller-chopping dense palmettos and hardwood thickets and thinning rows of planted pine trees. The result of such management practices will create a forest and canopy that is more open, allowing sunlight to reach the forest floor, so that native grasses and weeds can grow, which provide quail food and cover from predators.

Melissa Cummings

Melissa.Cummings@dnr.state.ga.us



Representatives from the Florida/Georgia Quail Coalition, L-R: Howard Vincent, Pheasants/Quail Forever; Dan Forster, GADNR; Nick Wiley, FWC and Bill Palmer, Tall Timbers. They celebrated the partnership agreement, Wednesday, April 16 at Tall Timbers. Photo: www.talltimbers.org.

STATE REPORTS

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Georgia Bat Working Group

On December 17, 2013 members of the Georgia Bat Working Group (GBWG) met at Gordon State College in Barnesville, GA. The attendees included representatives from state and federal governmental agencies, colleges and universities, private and non-profit organizations, and members of the public active in bat conservation. The meeting was spearheaded by Georgia Department of Natural Resources wildlife biologist **Katrina Morris** to reinvigorate the group, which is dedicated to the conservation of bats through integrated research, management, and public education. The discovery of White-Nose Syndrome in Georgia has increased focus on the need to identify the challenges and opportunities facing management of Georgia's bat populations. As the number of professionals working on bat-related projects in Georgia grows in response to this threat, the resulting increase in data collection aids the state's conservation professionals as they address these issues and develop management strategies to benefit bat populations. Since the December 2013 meeting, the GBWG website has been revamped and the newly created education, bat blitz, and website committees have been working diligently to improve conservation efforts in the state.

The GBWG will work extensively with the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network and other regional bat working groups to form collaborative research projects, disseminate research findings, and share information and resources with the goals of improving the regional management of bats and providing educational opportunities in the southeastern U.S. Future meetings of the GBWG will serve as networking and presentation opportunities for students, professionals, and the general public interested in bat conservation.

For more information and updates on GBWG news, events, and resources visit the Georgia Bat Working Group at www.gabat.org.

Michael Bender, mbender@gordonstate.edu

KENTUCKY



Kentucky Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Resources (KDFWR)

Deputy Commissioner **Benjy Kinman** retired after nearly 38 years with KDFWR. Coming to KDFWR as a fisheries biologist, Commissioner Kinman eventually served as Fisheries Program Coordinator and Division Director before becoming deputy commissioner. Online registration for Kentucky's hunter education programs is now statewide. The new system which was tested in various regions of the state last fall, will help speed up the delivery of hunter education cards to participants. The 2013 Ohio River Catfish Project was an effort by KDFWR to increase data collection for catfish in the Ohio River. The goal of the project was to determine the overall status of blue, flathead, and channel catfish in the Ohio River and determine if trophy-sized fish were being harvested disproportionately to their abundance. The project was conducted in response to trophy and tournament angler's assertions that commercial fishing is overharvesting larger catfish because of increasing demand for the larger fish by pay lakes. Results of the project can be found at <http://fw.ky.gov/Fish/Documents/ohiorivercatfish-project2013.pdf>

Chuck Elliott, Charles.Elliott@eku.edu



Photo: KDFWR Website, Hunter Education.

STATE REPORTS

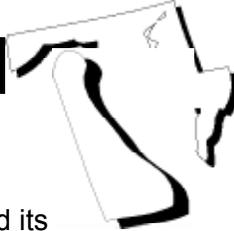
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LOUISIANA



NO NEWS REPORTED

MARYLAND/DELAWARE



Maryland-Delaware Chapter TWS

The Maryland-Delaware Chapter held its spring meeting on May 1st and May 2nd 2014 at the Redden Lodge in Redden State Forest located near Georgetown, Delaware. This meeting's scientific presentations focused on techniques for trapping of wildlife for research purposes in addition to presentations on commercial trapping and trapping for control of nuisance species.

Art Abrams, Art.Abrams@ARS.USDA.GOV

MISSISSIPPI



NO NEWS REPORTED

NORTH CAROLINA



NO NEWS REPORTED

OKLAHOMA



NO NEWS REPORTED

SOUTH CAROLINA



South Carolina Chapter

The South Carolina Chapter of The Wildlife Society is awash with news this spring.

Awards and Achievements:

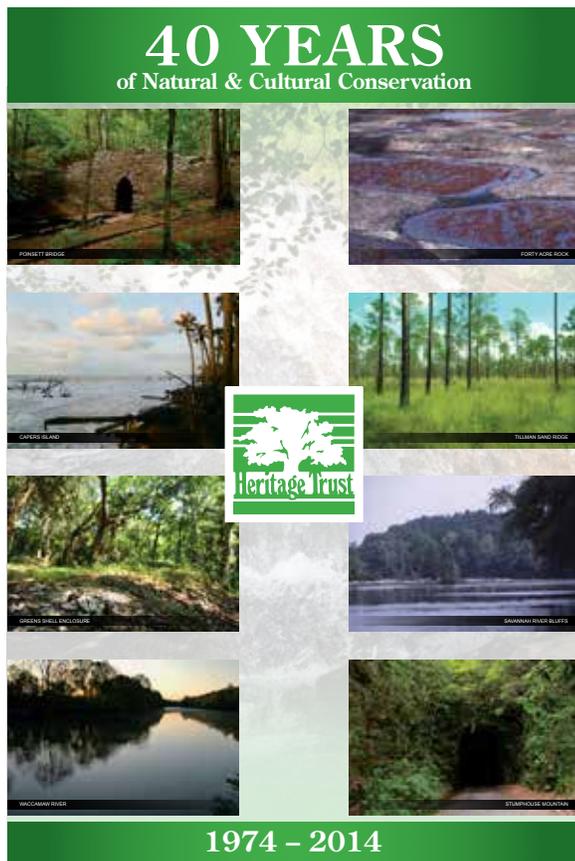
Our highly motivated partners and members have much to celebrate. Their good work has been recognized on many fronts. **Bob Perry**, career biologist with the SC Department of Natural Resources, was awarded the Conservationist of the Year Award by the SC Wildlife Federation for his 36 years of tireless efforts to conserve and manage coastal wetlands and his more recent endeavor to protect lands in Lancaster County through mitigation involving the re-opening of the Haile gold mine. Mr. **Dennis Walters** received the National Wild Turkey Volunteer of the Year Award for his coordination of the Neil Cost chapter's annual JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics, and Sportsmanship) event, the fifth such award, which has propelled the chapter into the Federation's Hall of Fame. Also, the entire SC State chapter was awarded one of the NWTF's most prestigious awards, the L.A. Dixon Memorial Chapter Award, which recognizes the state's outstanding conservation fundraising, education, and outreach among all of the NWTF chapters nationwide.



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The South Carolina Heritage Trust Program is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, and one of South Carolina's most treasured public properties, the Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge is celebrating its 75th anniversary with a variety of outdoor activities and events. Another outstanding accolade is the recognition of the SC workgroup of the South Atlantic Migratory Bird Initiative, which received the Conservation Champions Award issued by the North American Migratory Bird Joint Venture community. This award recognizes the workgroup's efforts to leverage more than \$365 million to conserve nearly 380,000 acres of critical habitat for migratory birds. Last, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Extension Service, established by the visionary bill authored by a Georgia Senator (**Michael Smith**) and a South Carolina Representative (**Asbury Lever**) to provide public education to support agriculture and natural resource based economies across the nation.



Legislative News:

The South Carolina legislature is considering a bill (HB4838) that will change regulations regarding the harvest of Wild Turkeys. The new bill, which is pending in the House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee, proposes to lengthen the spring hunting season by 15 days but also to reduce bag limits and increase penalties for violations. Also pending, is the latest revision of the SWAP (State Wildlife Action Plan). The draft of the next plan will be posted for public comment near the end of April. The SWAP identifies animals and plants needing conservation support and helps the state prioritize research and restoration projects.

Feature Restoration Project:

A series of partners, coordinated by The Nature Conservancy, are working to restore the Washo Reserve in Charleston County for the protection of the long-standing wood stork rookery there. The rookery is in danger of degradation due to changes occurring in the 200 acre cypress tree impoundment. Project staff have installed new water control structures to aid in managing water levels and have planted cypress seedlings to replace trees lost over the past decade. Also, approximately 30 acres of floating and emergent vegetation were treated to reduce access for depredation of the existing nests. To track the efficacy of the project, 9 wood storks were tagged with radio transmitters, and staff will enter the reserve to do a nest count in May.

Feature Research Project:

Researchers with SC DNR and Clemson University in partnership with the University of Tennessee genetics lab have been studying the population of Black Bears in the Mountain Hunt unit to estimate the population size using DNA analysis. Traditional methods estimate the population size between 800 and 1,000 bears, but individuals are now being reported well outside of the traditional range and harvests and sightings have increased significantly over the

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past ten years. This project, which will continue into the summer of 2014, expects to provide a better estimate of population size and some information about genetic diversity within the population.

Upcoming Events:

SC Wildlife Federation opens Photo Contest – April 22nd, <http://www.scwf.org/index.php/events/full-calendar/81-photo-contest>

Coyote Control Workshop – June 3rd Clemson, SC http://www.clemson.edu/extension/natural_resources/continuing_education/documents/coyotes.html

Benjamin Powell, BPOWEL2@clemson.edu

TENNESSEE

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency



Bear Attack Response Training for the Southeast

In March of this year, the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency hosted a specialized Bear Attack Response Training in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, for all partner SEAFWA (Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies) states. The intense training immersed participants in instruction for handling and investigating bear attacks through lectures and field-based training scenarios. Overwhelmingly accepted, 13 of the 15 SEAFWA states participated in the event.

For the training, the TWRA brought in two western-based specialists: **Mark Bruscano** (retired game warden, Wyoming) and **Brian Sommers** (wildlife field investigator, Montana). Combined, the two facilitators have worked thousands of cases and are experts in the field of wildlife-human attacks.

"This training is preparing the wildlife agencies, the wildlife officers, on how to respond," Daryl Ratajczak, chief of wildlife for TWRA, said the morning of the field-based scenarios.

"It's teaching them how to respond to bear attacks," says Brian Sommers. "The scenarios today will be dealing with learning how to handle victims and witnesses, dealing with local law enforcement that's on scene, dealing with the EMS folks ... dealing with news media that's on scene, and then processing the scene — collecting trace evidence off the bear and the victim."

During the training the attendees participated in one of five distinctly different field scenarios emulating real-life events. The intent was to provide a highly lifelike and stressful environment that would simulate how an attack may be in the 'real world'. Volunteers ranged from agency personnel acting in various non-agency roles, EMS personnel, media personnel, and more. The scenarios themselves surrounded back-country incidents, front country incidents, and – in one incident – a mother (portrayed by this author) had her small child taken by a bear from a city park. Each scenario was dressed with fake blood, authentic bear hair, and even bear carcasses that were provided for this event to make it as realistic as possible.

While the Southeast has thankfully not seen a bear fatality in a number of years, in Florida alone there have been two bear attacks within the last six months. While there is an onus of responsibility placed on the general population to become savvier in how to live near bears, the accountability doesn't stop there. Agencies are well aware and striving to bring more education to the masses. This educational effort, obviously, could not come at a more apropos time.

Stephanne Dennis, TWRF Bear Attack Response Training Coordinator and Large Carnivore Contractor (Wildlife Student, Oregon State University, member TN-TWS)

TWRA's West Tennessee Forestry Wins National Arbor Day Foundation Award

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency's West Tennessee Forestry Program was recently selected for a national award through the Arbor Day Foundation titled "Forest Lands Leadership Award." The forestry program has planted approximately 3.3 million hardwood seedlings on 7,500 acres of bottomland hardwood sites owned by TWRA since 2002. The tree plantings are on former row crop sites and provide vital wildlife habitat in an area where it is critically needed. Involved in the project are **Damon Hollis, Justin Hallett, Thomas Turner,** and **Josh Emerson**. The award was presented to representatives of the agency in Nebraska City, Nebraska in April.

Tennessee Tech University

Tennessee Tech University's Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society has been involved with many events and organizations during the 2013-2014 academic year. Our members volunteered with Great Outdoors University, a non-profit program of the Tennessee Wildlife Federation that introduces underprivileged children to the natural world. This program is centered around Nashville, but extends from Memphis to Chattanooga and Knoxville. Our members also assisted the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency at deer check-in stations in multiple counties of Region 3 on opening day of muzzleloader and rifle seasons. As a society, we attended the Southeastern Wildlife Conclave to gain hands-on experience and network with other members and professionals in our field. Our members also volunteered at Nashville's Earth Day with an interactive booth to show children the diversity of Tennessee's native wildlife. We also have volunteered with The Nature Conservancy of Tennessee treating eastern hemlock trees against the hemlock woolly adelgid at sites located within Cummins Falls State Park and Burgess Falls State Park. We also hosted a cookout called Beast Feast, where we served different types of wild game, along with side dishes, desserts, and drinks. Other chapter events have included a viewing of the Aldo Leopold film *Green Fire*, camping, bowling, and bonfires to fellowship and get to know new members.

This spring we sponsored a new event, a formal dinner, at which wildlife professionals spoke to our members about careers in natural resources and offered networking opportunities. As a professional student society, we have worked hard to provide many opportunities for our members to gain hands-on experience in the field, network with professionals, and come together as a team through volunteer events and social gatherings.

Steven Hayslette, Tennessee Tech University, shayslette@tnitech.edu

VIRGINIA



NO NEWS REPORTED

DUCKS UNLIMITED

Staff Changes

Nick Biasini will join the Southern Region team in mid-April as Regional Biologist for the lower MAV and will assist with our public and private land work in Alabama, Tennessee and Mississippi. He currently works for DU as Regional Biologist for programs in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Nick received his undergraduate education at the University of Alabama and the University of Alabama, Birmingham - with a major in Business Management. He received his MS in Forestry from Mississippi State University. Nick, his wife, Rachelle (pronounced Rachel), and their 4-month-old daughter, Emma Kate, will be relocating to the Ridgeland, Mississippi, area.

Jimmy Bailey joined the Southern Region team March 24 as an Engineering Technician for the lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley, filling the position vacated by the recent retirement of **Harry Davis**. Jimmy comes to us from the private sector and brings with him over 20 years of surveying experience. He is a licensed surveyor in Alabama and Mississippi and has worked extensively with GPS and conventional surveying equipment.

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NAWCA Update

Recently submitted grant applications:

- West Tennessee NAWCA
- South Carolina Lowcountry VI (DU)
- South Carolina Coastal Refuges Partnership II (US FWS grantee; written by DU & TNC)
- South Carolina Lowcountry Protection I
- Texas Gulf Coast XI
- Bayou L'Ours Terracing (Louisiana)
- Wham Brake (LDWF grantee; written by DU)

Southeast Conservation Unit – AR, MS, AL, TN, FL, GA, NC, SC, VA

North Carolina

Pea Island NWR Restoration Project Complete

DU recently worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to repair a storm-damaged coastal impoundment on Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina. Approximately 500 acres of coastal wetland habitat was improved through the project. DU staff repaired a breach in the perimeter levee and replaced an aged pump station to restore management capabilities to the unit. The impoundment had to be dredged to remove the displaced dike material from the wetland. That material was used to repair the breach, and staff installed a new bulkhead and aluminum water control structure.

Pea Island NWR is located on the north end of Hatteras Island, a coastal barrier island and part of a chain of islands known as the Outer Banks. The area was historically used for market waterfowl hunting, commercial fishing, farming and livestock operations. Today, the refuge is home to more than 365 species of birds, including seasonal concentrations of ducks, geese, swans, wading birds, shore birds, raptors and neotropical migrants.

Arkansas

Arkansas Greenwing Camp

Nineteen youths attended the 2014 Arkansas Greenwing Camp hosted at DU President **George Dunklin's** Five Oaks Lodge near Stuttgart, Arkansas. The camp is put on by Ducks Unlimited and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to provide youths the opportunity to learn about waterfowl, their habitat needs and annual life cycle. The importance of habitat conservation is a focus of the camp, with particular emphasis on Arkansas' wintering habitats. Waterfowl hunting traditions and hunting's role in conservation are also discussed.



Storm damage to impoundment perimeter



Repaired levee

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South Carolina State Grants Support – South Carolina

Director of Conservation Programs **Craig Le-Schack** attended the South Carolina Migratory Waterfowl Committee meeting in March, where the committee voted to contribute \$21,713 to the AFWA State Grants Program. This contribution will support projects in southern Ontario. South Carolina's cumulative giving is more than \$2.6 million, which comes from state duck stamp print sales and \$1 from every non-resident hunting license.

Florida Shiloh Launch Complex - Florida

A new space port has been proposed for construction in Florida along the boundary of Brevard and Volusia counties, within the management boundaries of the John F. Kennedy Space Center and Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. While DU is not opposed to the development of space launch facilities and the associated economic benefits, we have concerns with site placement and the potential indirect and direct impacts that could occur to the surrounding wetland ecosystem.

Specific concerns with the development of the Shiloh Launch Complex include: (1) impacts to waterfowl habitats and management, (2) disturbance to habitat and wildlife and (3) impacts to hunting opportunities.

DU submitted a letter of comments and requested that Florida members make their concerns about the launch location known during the public comment period in February.

Virginia Working Towards Funding for Virginia Conservation Projects

DU submitted a grant application in February for partial funding of improvements to two southeast Virginia wildlife management areas. Having already secured support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation,

Dominion Power, DU Major Sponsors and the Wildlife Foundation of Virginia, we are now seeking additional support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Once funding is secured, the projects will enhance waterfowl habitat on Hog Island Wildlife Management Area and Princess Anne WMA over the next several years. Enhancements will include improvements to water control infrastructure and management capabilities. These projects complement recent work DU and partners conducted on the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.

Southwest Conservation Unit – LA, OK, TX, NM

Oklahoma Neosho Bottoms Long-Term Project Begins

Ducks Unlimited is assisting the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation in their efforts to form a new wildlife management area in Northeast Oklahoma. The Neosho River floodplain historically was a dense complex of wetlands, including bottomland hardwood forests and wet prairies. Over the past century most of these wetlands have been lost to development. In 2012 Ducks Unlimited developed a comprehensive restoration plan for ODWC. This plan developed a conceptual restoration plan for over 20,000 acres of the Neosho River floodplain, from the state line downstream to the City of Miami. In 2013 ODWC began efforts to work with private landowners who are willing sellers, and purchased the first parcels of land which will eventually become the Neosho Bottoms WMA.

A large scale restoration effort is underway or being planned which will contribute to the successful establishment and restoration of the Neosho Bottoms project. First, the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Wetland Reserve Program has restored several wetlands within the project area. ODWC is actively working with private landowners to encourage their enrollment into WRP within Neosho Bottoms. In 2014, DU will complete engineering plans for the first restoration project on several additional state-owned parcels. Finally, the Tri-State Mining District Natural Resources Damage Assessment will in the future

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provide additional funding for the project. While this project will take many years to be complete, waterfowl hunters can look forward to future opportunities in Northeast Oklahoma.

Louisiana Sherburne Project Dedicated

Louisiana residents and visitors will have improved and increased opportunity for waterfowl hunting and wildlife watching on the popular Sherburne Wildlife Management Area. Ducks Unlimited has partnered with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to create additional wetland habitat on the South Farm Unit of the WMA, which will open new areas for public waterfowl hunting and provide increased habitat management capabilities. Project partners gathered in February at the WMA to celebrate the site improvements.

This project is the first one in the state supported in part by Louisiana DU license plate sales, giving DU members and supporters a terrific, tangible example of what supporting Ducks Unlimited means for them in Louisiana. It was dedicated to the late **John W. Barton, Sr.**, of Baton Rouge. Barton was a dedicated outdoorsman, Ducks Unlimited supporter and friend to all who met him.

Partners on the project include LDWF, Ducks Unlimited, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, North American Wetlands Conservation Council, Irene W. and C. B. Pennington Foundation, friends of John W. Barton, Sr., Wetlands America Trust and The Mosaic Company, which has operations near Baton Rouge and contributed to the project.

Andi Cooper, acooper@ducks.org



Partners gather to celebrate John W. Barton, Sr. dedication.

NOMINATIONS

C.W. Watson Award

Nominations are being sought for the 2014 Clarence W. Watson Award. This annual award will be presented at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Conference in Destin, Florida, October 19-22, 2014. The Clarence W. Watson Award is the most prestigious award given in the Southeast and is presented to the career individual who, in the opinion of the Award Committee, has made the greatest contribution to wildlife or fish conservation during the previous year or years. Consideration includes research, administration, law enforcement, I&E, wildlife management, fish management, teachers, and students. Preference is given to nominees in the Southeast. The award is a mounted bronze plaque presented jointly by the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society, the Southeastern Section of the Wildlife Society, and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. All Southeastern fish and wildlife conservationists and other interested persons are encouraged to nominate worthy candidates. Nominations should be submitted in the format shown below and should include complete information on the candidate's background; i.e., education, training, noteworthy accomplishments, and particularly, the achievement(s) for which the nomination is being made. The nomination should include, but not be limited to, a description of the accomplishment(s), application in the state and region concerned, time involved, and the amount of aid received from associates. Furnish as much information as possible to aid the committee in making the selection. A previously unselected nominee may be resubmitted each year.

NOMINATION FORMAT

I. Background Information

- A. Name
- B. Birthdate
- C. Education
- D. Employment History

II. Accomplishment(s)* and application of accomplishment(s) upon which the Award should be made

- A. Problem or opportunity with which nominee was involved.
- B. Action nominee took to solve problem or capitalize on opportunity.
- C. Results (accomplishments) of nominee's actions.

*The C.W. Watson Award may be given for accomplishing a single item or a series of different non-related items. But the award is given to a nominee who has contributed the most to any of the appropriate areas of fish and wildlife conservation. Emphasis is on contribution, not tenure. Those making nominations are requested to insure that they explain clearly what was accomplished and how it contributed.

Selection will be based on specific accomplishment(s) and other information included in the letter of nomination. Nominations should be sent to: **J. Wesley Neal**, Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Aquaculture, Box 9690, Mississippi State, MS 39762-9690; jneal@cfr.msstate.edu; 662-325-8363 as soon as possible but no later than **August 15, 2014**.



NOMINATIONS

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Student Chapter of the Year Award

Active and effective student chapters are needed to achieve The Wildlife Society's goals, many of which are best addressed at the state/provincial or local level. Student chapters also strengthen the Society's membership recruitment and retention efforts by providing opportunities for member involvement in Society activities. The Student Chapter of the Year award pays tribute to and recognize exceptional achievements by these important units of The Wildlife Society.

Student chapters are invited to nominate themselves for the award. The Southeastern Section of TWS provides a plaque and a \$1,000.00 cash award to the student chapter of the year based on the chapter's involvement in activities that advance their members professional development and the goals of TWS. Guidelines for the chapter award can be obtained from the S.E. Section President and must be turned in by June 30, 2014. Please assist this year's committee by submitting materials via email (materials should be sent as a single PDF file) to Awards@wildlife.org by June 30, 2014 with a subject line: SETWS Student Chapter Award.

Wildlife Management Excellence Award

The nomination format for the 2014 Wildlife Management Excellence Award (WMEA) is provided on the following page. Each year during our annual meeting, the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society (SETWS) presents the WMEA to recognize excellence in wildlife management activities carried out within the member states of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Persons making nominations must be current members of the SETWS; however, nominees need not be members. Nominations may include either an individual or group and evaluation of nominees will be based upon a single management achievement, not a "lifetime service" that has been accomplished in the field of wildlife management. Examples of management achievements worthy of the award include activities such as an exceptional break-through in bringing back an endangered species, the rapid (over a few years) development of a management area due to an individual or group effort, a major effort in stopping a particularly environmentally damaging project or an extension education effort that results in substantial and measurable change in private landowner acreage set aside for wildlife use.

Nominations should be submitted following the nomination format and will be reviewed by a five-member committee. The committee is seeking nominations of individuals or groups who have performed "above and beyond" in their nominated category with good quantitative data to support the nomination. The deadline for nominations is **1 August 2014**. The recipient will be presented with the Wildlife Management Excellence Award at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society.



NOMINATIONS

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Your participation is vital to the awards programs of the SETWS and is greatly appreciated. We all are aware of the multitude of deserving individuals and groups within our essential profession. As such, please take the time to nominate these deserving folks. Thank you for your time and dedication to wild-life conservation.

Wildlife Management Excellence Award Nomination Form

I. Date:

II. Nominee contact information:

“Name”
“Title and Agency” “Address”
“Phone” “Email”

III. Nominating contact information:

“Name”
“Title and Agency” “Address”
“Phone” “Email”

IV. Descriptive title of achievement:

V. Quantitative information on the achievement:

Please provide a short description of the nominee’s achievement in the following categories where applicable. The information may be attached on additional pages or inserted where appropriate as an electronic file.

1) Conservation and management benefits

- a) Species influenced
- b) Area (acreage) influenced
- c) Regional impacts
- d) Other

2) Educational benefits

- a) Target audiences
- b) Estimated size of audience reached
- c) Other

3) Scientific contributions

- a) Dissemination of information through reports, manuals, publications or other media
- b) Influence on management policies
- c) Other

4) Brief description of economic benefits

VI. Quantitative Information on the Achievement

VII. Narrative Description of the Achievement (1-page)

VIII. Letters of support (2-3)

Please submit nominee(s) by mail or e-mail to:

Christopher S. DePerno, Chair; Wildlife Management Excellence Award; North Carolina State University, Turner House, Box 7646, Raleigh, NC 27695; Tel: (919)513-7559;
Email: chris_deperno@ncsu.edu

Deadline for nominations is **1 August 2014**.

News from Headquarters

Staff Changes

Chief Operating Officer

Ed Thompson joined The Wildlife Society in February 2014 as Chief Operating Officer after acquiring more than 17 years of business leadership experience with the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, one of the largest membership organizations in the United States serving more than 375,000 members. During his tenure with AOPA, Ed held three different vice president positions that provided him with a wide range of executive-level experience in strategic planning and budgeting, member services and experience, business development, products and services marketing, and major corporate partnerships and sponsorships. In 2013 he was invited to be a panelist at IEG's annual conference for sponsorship professionals, sharing strategies and successes during an interactive session entitled "Creative and Successful Approaches to Association Partnerships".

Earlier in his career, Ed gained additional leadership experience in a variety of business sectors with companies that included Snyder's of Hanover (snack food manufacturing), Pennsylvania Blue Shield (health insurance), and Hanover Direct (mail order catalogs). He also has a strong professional background in writing and website administration as a former NFL writer whose features appeared in both print and web channels through FoxSports.com and Scout.com.

Ed holds a B.A. in Political Science from Gettysburg College. He's a member of the American Society of Association Executives and is a past president of the Gettysburg Jaycees.



Assistant Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships

Keith Norris joined The Wildlife Society as the Assistant Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships in February 2014. He holds a B.S. degree in Wildlife from Purdue University, a M.A. degree in Public Policy & Management from the John Glenn School of Public Affairs, and is completing a M.S. degree in Environment & Natural Resources (Wildlife) at The Ohio State University. He has been a member of TWS since 2008, has been involved at all levels of TWS subunits throughout his career, and became certified as an Associate Wildlife Biologist® in January 2014. Keith previously worked as a research technician for the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment and as a program coordinator for the Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow program. His responsibilities at TWS include overseeing the Society's Technical Review process, providing support to TWS subunits on conservation policy issues through the Conservation Affairs Network, and representing TWS in policy activities with other partners. Keith can be reached at KNorris@wildlife.org.

Development Manager

Hedy Ross joined The Wildlife Society as Development Manager in February, 2014. She has over 16 years of association experience, working with The Association of American Railroads and The Obesity Society on marketing, membership, communications and scientific publishing. She was Managing Editor of the monthly journal *Obesity*, significantly raising the Impact Factor and successfully leveraging the journal to increase society membership.

Ms. Ross spent 5 years at the University of Maryland, working with professors and graduate students to enhance the writing and editing of journal submissions, dissertations and grant applications. Ms. Ross also ran a start-up software company that developed electronic commerce software for PC and Macintosh platforms. After developing a strategic plan and raising the seed money, she managed the marketing, administrative and customer support functions of the business.

Ms. Ross holds an M.B.A. in Marketing from the University of Maryland and an M.S. in Statistics from George Washington University.



2013-14 Southeastern Section Officers

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Photo: NWTF

MEETINGS OF INTEREST

JULY

2014 Meeting of American Society of Ichthyologists & Herpetologists

July 30 - August 3, 2014
Chattanooga Convention Center
Chattanooga, Tennessee
<http://www.dce.k-state.edu/conf/jointmeeting/>

20th Annual Meeting of the National Bobwhite Technical Committee

July 29 - August 1, 2014
Sheraton West Des Moines Hotel
Des Moines, Iowa
www.meetings.iowatws.org

AUGUST

99th Annual Meeting of the Ecological Society of America

August 10 - August 15 2014
Sacramento, CA
"From Oceans to Mountains: It's All Ecology."
www.esa.org/am/

OCTOBER

68th Annual SEAFWA Conference

October 19-22, 2014
Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa
Destin, Florida
<http://seafwa.org/conferences/2014/index.html>

Hosted by the Florida
Fish and Wildlife
Conservation
Commission



The Wildlife Society 21st Annual Conference

October 25-30, 2014
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
www.wildlifesociety.org

Registration opens June 2nd!



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society Membership Application

New Renewal Change of Address

_____ Number of years (multiple year membership)

(please print)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____

PHONE _____

For new memberships or renewals, please enclose a check for \$10.00 per year (students: \$6.00) payable to Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society with this application and send to:

Dr. L. Mike Conner, Secretary-Treasurer
Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society
Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center
3988 Jones Center Drive
Newton, GA 39870
mike.conner@jonesctr.org